

Cor Series: Old Friends and New Family

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Summary: Part two of the Cor Series. The team must hunt down four of its missing members, and some cold hard truth comes out.

Cor Series: Old Friends and New Family

> <meta name="GENERATOR"> Old Friends and New Family Â©

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Old Friends and New Family

> Second installment in the Cor Series<br> By Dimira Marka

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Erik opened the door to the cabin. There was a rush of cold air that whirled past him into the cabin. He shivered, but not from the wind. He searched the room with his eyes. The main room was small, dusty, and old. The furniture was coated with a thick layer of dust. Memories of Ariel and the time they had spent there flooded back to him. He stepped in.

> <br> Another gust of wind came up and swept through the room. Something rustled under one of the table's legs. He cocked his head to the side curiously. He walked over and knelt down. What have we here? He gently tugged the piece of paper from under the table's leg.

He stood up and squinted in the dark room to read the paper. Finding that he couldn't read in the light, he moved over to the window next to the door. His eyes scanned the folded piece of paper. His name was written on the front. He drew in a deep breath and unfolded the paper gently.

> <br> What he read shocked him beyond belief. He stumbled over to the table and steadied himself on its edge, and drew in another deep breath. He re-read the letter

> <br> \_((Dearest Erik,

> I am so sorry I can not be here to greet you home, for I have taken leave to my sister's home in Nova Scotia, for I have wondrous news. You are going to be a father, Erik. I am pregnant! Is not that wonderful news? I would have stayed here to greet you, but I know not when you will return, and my sister has insisted that I come to her home and see her so that I will not be alone if something should happen. Please, come to Canada as soon as you can. <br> Much love,

> Ariel Margot Cor)) <br> \_

> <em>A child? That is why she left? She was carrying my child, and I did not know? My, Lord. I have to find her and my child!<em> Erik stuffed the paper into the pocket of his coat. He stood up slowly and drew in yet another deep breath. He was a father, again. Not only did he have his two children by his late wife, now he had another child. He swelled with pride and shame at the same time. He looked around the cabin one last time, and slowly headed back to the door. Now not only bound and determined to find Ariel, but the child he had never known.

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"Bob and weave!" Logan bellowed. "Use your claws!"

> <br> Eva sprung back to her feet and did a triple hand spring out of Sabertooth's path. With a metallic slink, the razor sharp metal claws, courtesy of Mr. Sinister, snaked out of the tips of her fingers on her right hand. She reached out and caught Sabertooth's gut. He let out a feral yell and dove at her. She felt her self being flung into the wall. Sabertooth had her pinned.

> <br> "Got ya, frail," the hologram said. He raised his hand up to bring it down and slash her.

> <br> "\_N'encore\_," Eva said. She kneed him in the groin before he could. She dove out of his way with another triple handspring.

> <br> She grunted as she landed on her wrist the wrong way. She fell on her back. She let out a yelp and rolled out of the way just as Sabertooth dove on the spot where she lay. She turned her back for only a moment. As she got back to her feet she felt a blunt pain in her side and saw a blur of yellow and orange. She let out a scream and felt and heard her head impact with the floor. She knew no more.

> <br> The next thing she felt was Logan's hand on her shoulder. She opened her eyes.

> <br> "Mmmm Logan? \_Deiu\_! What happened?" she struggled to sit up. Her head was pounding, and she used her telepathy to help block out some of the pain.

> <br> "You did what I warned you not to do, you let yer guard down," He said, and helped Eva sit up.

> <br> "Oh, \_desole\_," she apologized. Logan helped her over to a bench. She sat down and he handed her a bottle of water. She took a long drink. "Thanks."

> <br> "But, you did do okay today, kid," he said and sat down on the bench next to her.

> <br> "May I remind ya, Misiour Logan," she stressed his name playfully. "I am not a kid," Eva smiled at him.  
> <br> "Yeah, right, how old are you? Twelve, right?" he joked.  
> <br> "You... ya know how old I am, twenty seven. Not a kid," she said and crossed her arms.  
> <br> "You are to a kid," he said.  
> <br> "Compared ta ya, I am. But ya don' have ta call me that."  
> <br> "Then whudda' I call ya?" he asked.  
> <br> Eva took another long swallow of water. She wiped her mouth, "Whatever floats yer boat Now what? More fighting exercises, laps?"  
  
> <br> "No, you've done enough for today, Ev'," Logan said and stretched his arms.  
> <br> "Good, I'm goin' ta take a shower," Eva said and stood up and tossed the water bottle at him. "See ya at dinner," she said as she walked out of the danger room. The bottle hit him dead on in the stomach.

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> Eva ran the water in her shower as hot as she could stand. She stripped off her sports bra and spandex leggings; it felt good to have her skin exposed to the air, and not trapped in the tight clothes. She looked into mirror at her body. It was close to that of a model. Perfect breasts, a tiny waist, perfect hips; only one thing was not as she wanted it to be. She turned so that she could see her back. She saw the scars. They criss-crossed her back, long, some deep grooves, some raised up. She bit her lip. She rarely ever let anyone see her back; she felt very brave this day, wearing something like that sports bra where you could see.<br>  
> Logan had found out about her scars on accident. She was alone in the pool alone ( the only way she would swim) and he was passing through the poolroom and saw her back. He'd drilled the reason for the scars out of her. It was Mia, her abusive aunt. <br>  
> Eva closed her eyes and pictured Logan's face at the moment that he saw the scars. The look on his face. Pure concern and lust for revenge. <em>Revenge? Why?</em> She was just another person. There were and are hundreds of people in the world who've been hurt and abused, so why did he go ballistic when he found out about her abuse? Did she mean something to him?  
> <br> Eva turned away from the mirror and slipped into the shower. The water cascaded down her body. \_Jus' a crush.\_ She reached over to the shower caddy, pulled out a bottle of shampoo and dumped some into her hand. She lathered the soap in her scalp and worked it through her hair, all the way down to the ends that stretched to her thighs. She relaxed against the shower wall. She closed her eyes and stood in the shower for an hour, letting the water bounce off her skin

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Erik approached the small brown house. He looked at the numbers on the door, and then at the address on the paper. They matched. He stuffed the piece of paper in the pocket of his trench coat. He raised his fist and knocked twice on the door. He prayed that Ariel would answer the door, or maybe her sister, Mia. His hope was crushed when the door was opened.  
> <br> A short, plump woman with bouncy red curls on her head opened the door, she studied his face for a moment. "Marcus?" her voice was

bright and her face lit up.

> <br> "No, ma'am."

> <br> "Oh, my apologies, sir. You looked like someone I know. Can I help you?"

> <br> "Uh, yes. I am looking for Ariel or Mia Cor. Do they still live here?" Erik asked.

> <br> "Oh, my no. They don't, I'm sorry. They both died, years ago," the woman replied.

> <br> A knife was stuck through his heart. "Dead?" \_No! No, no, no, no!\_

> <br> "Yes, they died, oh, Mia, fourteen years ago, and Ariel about twenty eight years ago," she replied.

> <br> She's dead? For the love of God, no! Erik's mind cried.

> <br> "May I ask who you are?" the woman asked.

> <br> Erik thought of what he should say. "I'm an old friend of the family, from Russia."

> <br> "You don't sound Russian," she said and looked at him suspiciously. "What's your name?"

> <br> "Magnus," he used his middle name.

> <br> "Magnus..." she asked. \_He looks awful seedy. Probably some crook.\_

> <br> "Magnus Lensherr," Erik said.

> <br> "Lensherr. Are you related to Erik Lensherr?" She asked.

> <br> "Uh, yes. He's my brother," Erik lied.

> <br> "That man, he's the one who left Ariel pregnant, and alone." She looked up at him. "Is he still alive? Did he send you here?" the woman questioned.

> <br> "No, he died years ago, too. I only recently found out about his connections with the Cor family and came to find out about the child he had with Miss Cor," Erik said. \_Dead, my God, she's dead! My Ariel!\_ He had expected as much, though. She would be terribly old if alive.

> <br> "Oh, my, are you in for a surprise. Please, come in, Mr. Lensherr," the woman said and led him into the house. She lead him into a small living room, "Please, sit." she motioned for the sofa. "By the way, my name is Shirley Frey. Now, you want to know about the Cor children, then?"

> <br> "Yes, Ariel and the child she had," he said and sat on the couch. Shirley took a seat in an armchair of to the side.

> <br> Shirley looked at him, "Child? Oh, you must no know. Ariel didn't have a child. She had children, triplets."

> <br> Erik almost fainted, "T-triplets? Are you serious?" \_She can't be serious!\_

> <br> "Mhmm..." she nodded. "Three beautiful children; two girls and a boy. When Ariel died, Mia adopted them," she looked at his face, which was pale. Something was up. "Are you okay, Mr. Lensherr?"

> <br> "Y-yes. These children, where are they? What are their names?"

> <br> "You think me a fool? I'm not just going to give out information about them unless I know who you really are, and what your motives are," Shirley said. She crossed her arms and narrowed her eyes at him.

> <br> "I can assure you..." he looked at her. Her face was stern and unreasoning. He knew he would not get a straight answer out of her. He would stick with questions she might be more willing to answer. "Can you tell me how Ariel died?"

> <br> "In childbirth," she replied. "The children almost didn't live at all, especially one... she was so small... There's a picture of them there." She pointed to the corner table. In a small wooden frame was a picture of three children.

> <br> The two girls' hair was swept up into ponytails. All three of them had blue sparkling eyes and blonde hair, tinged with white and silver. They looked only ten, or maybe twelve. The girls were in navy-blue skirts and white blouses. The boy in a pair of navy pants and a white shirt. The two girls each wore a Star of David around their necks. \_My children...\_

> <br> Shirley looked at Magnus and realized he had a tear in his eye. I don't know why I am doing this... "Their names are Stephanie Cor, Eva Cor, and Marcus Cor. They live and work in New York State, at some private school. Now, get the hell outta here, Erik Lensherr, before I get pissed."

> <br> Erik looked up from the picture, "How did you...?"

> <br> "Ariel was my best friend, and she loved you, and she told me everything about you. She told me your all of your family died in the WWII. Now, get outta my house before I get my gun," Shirley said.

> <br> Erik was not scared. He was the most powerful mutant in the world, but he stood up and walked for the door. He stopped and looked back at Shirley. "You have no idea, Ms. Frey, what this has meant to me."

> <br> Shirley smiled lightly. "Just one thing, Mr. Lensherr, I don't want you to go and meet them."

> <br> "What?"

> <br> "They hold a terrible grudge against you. If they meet you, they might just kill you. I'd expect nothing more of them. Rumor has it that they are mutants, too." Shirley's face was serious.

> <br> "I see" Erik thought for a moment, then something registered: mutants, private school in New York. "Tell me, the school that they work at, is it Professor Xavier's..."

> <br> "...School for Gifted Youngsters. How did you know?"

> <br> Before Erik could answer, he had taken to the sky. Shirley stared in awe of his exit. "A mutant? Oh, gosh, they could be in danger!" she thought, and darted inside to try and call them.

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> Logan looked over Eva in her full guild uniform as she walked into the kitchen: a black jumpsuit, utility belt, leather boots and a trench coat. Her hair was pulled up, braided and wrapped up around her head like a turban. Her face was distorted by a sort of black mask that Remy and Marcus also wore that covered her cheeks and neck. A small patch marked with an X adorned her shoulder and her coat. He saw the tattoo on the back of her neck that identified her as a member of the Thieves Guild of New Orleans. <br>

> She came in followed by Marcus and Remy, each in their uniforms as well. Both Marcus and Remy's long hair was pulled up onto ponytails.<br>

> "Hey, Logan," she said as she walked in. He nodded in acknowledgment and sipped his beer.<br>

> "Ya mind?" Marcus asked and pulled out a chair.<br>

> "Knock yerself out," he said. Remy and Marcus sat down. Eva walked over to the refrigerator and pulled out three beers and shut the door with her rear. <br>

> "Lucky fridge," commented Remy with a playful, joking smile. <br>

> "Ya pervert," she walked over to the table and handed Marcus a beer. "I ain't givin' ya yer <em>biere</em> now." She held back the bottle as Remy reached for it.

> <br> "\_Catin\_", Remy insulted her and pulled out a playing card. Eva's eyes flared silver and Marcus laughed. "Sorry, \_souer\_,

\_navre\_. \_Honnete\_." Eva sighed, shook her head, and threw the bottle at him. He caught it and put away the playing card.

> <br> She sat down at the table and popped opened the bottle with one of her claws. "What have ya been up ta?" Eva asked, trying to bring about a conversation.

> <br> Logan shrugged, "You?"

> <br> Eva pointed for to Remy and Marcus, "These idiots got me up at five this mornin' ta make me do exercises. Steph was lucky, she went ta town with Jubilee and 'Ro early for some reason or another. Think there was a sale Jubes wanted ta go ta."

> <br> "Ya haven't done any guild exercises for years, ya need the practice. Ya're still aparta the guild. The rest o' us aren't. What if Henri or Poppa called up and had a job for ya?"

> <br> "Yeah, right. The guild hasn't asked me for nothing since I left for collage eight years ago, they wouldn't just suddenly call me back for somthin'. Popa wouldn't let 'em."

> <br> "Still, bein' able t' pick a lock could save y' life," Remy said. "'Member th' time..."

> <br> -

> <br> Sabertooth, Shout, and Scalphunter crouched in the woods on the edge of the mansion's yard. Scalphunter looked over at Shout. "You ready, Lou?"

> <br> "Never more ready," he replied, cracking his knuckles.

> <br> "Three of th' four we want are in the kitchen, you 'memeber where that is?"

> <br> Shout thought back to the schematics of the mansion he had studied at the base. "Yep."

> <br> Scalphunter smiled, "Good. You know what to do: take 'em down. And remember, the boss wants 'em alive and in decent shape."

> <br> "And get Wolverine down, too," Sabertooth said, baring his teeth.

> <br> Shout smiled and began to slowly make his way across the lawn determined in his mission.

> <br> -

> <br> "...ya shoulda been dere," Remy finished his story. Eva laughed to herself and leaned back in her chair.

> <br> Jean poked her head into the kitchen. "Eva, Marcus, you have a call. Whoever it is, she's hysterical," she said and held out the phone.

> <br> With her powers, Eva took the phone from Jean. Jean turned and left. "Hello?" she said genially into the receiver.

> <br> "Eva, you're in so much danger!" a hysterical woman said.

> <br> "Who is this? Slow down," Eva said. Marcus, Logan and Remy looked at her.

> <br> "Shirley, its Shirley. You have to... He dangerous," she sputtered.

> <br> "Who is? Shirley, who is?" Eva said calmly.

> <br> "Your father, he was here. He's a mutant!" Shirley sputtered.

> <br> "Our father?" Eva said. All three of the men looked at her. "Shirley, whatta ya talkin' about?"

> <br> "He was here, looking for you. I told him where you were, I didn't know what he was..."

> <br> "It's okay, \_mon\_ \_ami\_, we're fine. Who is he, Shirley? Ya never told me before, tell me now," Eva demanded.

> <br> There was a sudden loud sound. It steadily grew. "Eri..." Shirley began to say.

> <br> Eva thrust the phone away form her ear and cupped her hands over her ears; the pain was intense, burning in her mind. Marcus, Remy and Logan did the same. Throughout the mansion everyone did as

its intensity rose. The loud penetrating sound was too much. Outside Shout stood, using all of his energy to knock out the members of the household. His entire body vibrated with his vocal chords; he had never used his power to this extent before.

> <br> He stopped after a moment, he felt like he would faint. He was breathing hard. \_I'm sorry, my friends\_ he thought as a moment of guilt overcame him. All was silent, except for Sabertooth and Scalphunter, who were coming up behind him.

> <br> "Good job, Lou," Scalphunter said as he walked over to Shout. The guilt vanished with Scalphunter's voice. "Let's go get our trophies."

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Slowly, the X-Men began to wake up, their heads pounding. As they rallied in the War Room to analyze the situation, they realized they were missing four of their members: Eva, Logan, Remy and Marcus.

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The X-Men rallied in the war room. Jean sent out a telepathic call to Stephanie, Ororo, and Jubilee. Only a minute later Stephanie came flying to the property, still on their way in her car was Ororo and with her, Jubilee.

> <br> "What happened?" Stephanie blurted out as she came running into the war room.

> <br> "We have no idea," Jean said and rubbed her temples. "There was a loud sound, so loud and painful that it knocked everyone out cold. When we woke up we couldn't find Eva, Marcus, Wolverine, or Remy."

> <br> "It was the Marauders. Shout ta be precise. His power is similar ta that of Sean Cassidy, Banshee. That is the sound and the reason ya were all out cold," Stephanie said. "Sinister's got them."

> <br> "Why would he want to take them again? Does this have something to do with Gambit and the Morloc" Cyclops began.

> <br> "You say it like he was the only one involved in it. I wasn't there, but don't push all the blame on him" Stephanie hissed. "No, he really has no interest in Remy, just in Mark an' Ev' an me."

> <br> "Where would he have taken them?" asked Cyclops. Ororo and Jubilee came in as he spoke. Warren briefed them on the situation.

> <br> "It's been so long," Stephanie shook her head. "I can't remember where his base is..."

> <br> "Perhaps a telepathic link," suggested Professor Xavier. "We could search for the memory of where he is."

> <br> "It's a long shot, but we gotta try it. Ain't nothin' else we can do," Stephanie said.

> <br> "Jean," said the professor. She nodded and moved over to Stephanie and the rest of the X-Men were silent as Jean and Stephanie began the telepathic link.

> <br> They searched the reaches of Stephanie's mind together, trying to find the lost or repressed memory of the location of Sinister's base. Then they saw the base in their minds. A small complex, on a beach. Waves, sand, and form what Jean could detect, most unpleasant memories buried deep within Stephanie's mind. The colors, which inherent in everyone's mind, were dark and there was a coldness in that region of her mind that made Jean physically shiver.

> <br> Stephanie's eyes snapped open. "That's it! I remember now. The

island, it's in the South Pacific. I don' know if he still keeps 'is base there..."

> <br> "That's were it was when we rescued you and Eva," said Morph.

> <br> "It is worth a try. Anything is," Ororo said.

> <br> "All right. I want everyone on board the Blackbird in ten minutes. We have a job to do," Cyclops said. All of the X-Men scattered to get their uniforms and then made their way to the hangar. Within ten minutes they were in the air.

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Eva stirred in her bonds, her arms were above her head, her legs were spread-eagle and bound at the ankles. Her head throbbed and she could feel bruises all over her body. She opened her eyes quickly and looked about. The walls of the room were metal gray. Metal. Her powers. She tried to pull the bonds away. It didn't work. Her powers were gone. Scrambler she thought. The room was empty, save a table on the opposite wall. She looked to her left. Marcus was bound to the wall. Next to him was another set of bonds. She looked to her right. Remy and Logan were both bound to the wall as she was.

> <br> "Remy? Logan?" she called to them, hoping that they would be conscience.

> <br> "They can't hear you," a voice said. Eva looked up to the corner of the ceiling. There was a speaker.

> <br> "What in th' 'ell da ya want now!" she screamed. She struggled against the metal bonds; they tore at her wrists. She'd rather rip her arms off than stay in this place.

> <br> "Oh, my child, you know what I want, and it's only a matter of time before I get it," said the voice.

> <br> "Get what? I don't know what in the 'ell yar are talking about!" Tears formed in her eyes from frustration and fear.

> <br> "You'll know soon enough. In the meantime, you'll have a visitor soon, and you'll have lots to talk about," the voice said and there was a click over the speaker. She was alone again.

> <br> "Marcus, Remy, Logan? Oh, for the love of God, answer me!" she pleaded. None of them moved, except to breathe. Eva hung her head for a time. She opened her eyes back up and looked at the door. The knob turned slowly and opened.

> <br> Sabertooth, Shout and Riptide came in, dragging with them an older man. He was partially conscious; his clothes--a pair of plain khakis and T-shirt--were spotted with blood. She couldn't see his face. Scalphunter came in after them. He smiled at Eva cruelly.

> <br> "Hey, Evie, baby. Long time, no fu..." Scalphunter began.

> <br> "Say it and I rip you apart," said Shout as the three thrust the man into the bonds next to Marcus.

> <br> "You can see the family resemblance," said Sabertooth quietly. Eva paid no attention to him.

> <br> "Lucas, please, ya have ta fight it! Ya're stronger than this, than them!" Eva pleaded as the men walked out.

> <br> Shout turned back to her. "I am sorry," he said, and he walked out quickly before she could say anything else.

> <br> Eva turned over to the man they had brought in. "Sir?" she called.

> <br> He mumbled and shifted slightly. "Can ya hear me? Are ya hurt bad?"

> <br> He mumbled quietly, "Where... who..."

> <br> "This is Mr. Sinister's lab. He's a sick freak. I'm Eva, who are you?"

> <br> His head snapped up. "E-Eva?" She still couldn't see his face.



> <br> "Yes," Eva said. "Who are you?"  
> <br> \_Eva, oh my God, could it be?\_ He leaned over to see her face. But before he did he saw Marcus. His mouth dropped.  
> <br> "Sir, are ya all right?" she asked as he turned away.  
> <br> "No, Miss, I am not," he said. He closed his eyes and hung his head down. Eva turned away and did the same.  
> <br> "Were stuck 'ere, till my friends get 'ere. Have ya heard of th' X-Men?"  
> <br> The man didn't speak. \_The acolytes will come for me soon. They'll infiltrate the base, rescue my children and me.  
> <em>  
> Eva sighed the man would be more coherent later, then she'd talk to him and hopefully the others would be awake.<p>

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The blackbird took off at top speed through the sky, across the country and toward the isolated island in the South Pacific.  
> <br> "I think I got the location of the call that was made," Jean said. Stephanie leaned over her shoulder.  
> <br> "Exactly how panicked was this person?" Stephanie asked.  
> <br> "She sounded like someone was about to kill you," Jean said. "Do you think it had something to do with Sinister?"  
> <br> "It depends. Did ya get it?"  
> <br> "Yeah," Jean said and typed for a minute. "There: North Bend, Nova Scotia, Canada."  
> <br> "Nort' Bend? Who'd be callin' us from there?" Stephanie questioned. "No one there knows we live in New York. Hell, I don't think they don't now where we've been since we ran away when we were fourteen. Can ya get a lock on who the call was from?"  
> <br> Jean began to type. "Here, I got a name. Frey, Shirley."  
> <br> Stephanie jerked away, "Shirley? How in the...? Ya got the number?"  
> <br> "Yeah, 555-2715. You can call her," she replied. Stephanie took a cellular phone from her pocket. It was Thieves Guild issue. It high tech even over the current standards of the present, even though she'd gotten it several years ago. She dialed the number quickly and it rang twice  
> <br> "Hello?" a voice came through.  
> <br> "Hi, can I speak ta Shirley Frey?" Stephanie asked.  
> <br> "Speaking," said the woman.  
> <br> "Yeah, hi, Shirley this is Stephanie Co..."  
> <br> "Stephanie! Oh, my God! Are you okay? I was so worried, I kept trying to call," the woman began.  
> <br> "Yeah, I'm fine, Shir'. Listen, ya talked ta Eva earlier. What did ya say? It's important."  
> <br> "I, well. Your father showed up at my house," Shirley said.  
  
> <br> "Our father?!" Stephanie said, practically screaming. All of the occupants of the Blackbird looked at her.  
> <br> "Yeah, and he's dangerous. He's a mutant. He was flying!" said Shirley. "I was scared he'd find and hurt you three."  
> <br> "A mutant? Shirley, ya need ta tell me what his name is," Stephanie said. Some of the other X-Men were still watching her, and listening.  
> <br> "His name is Erik Lensherr," said Shirley.  
> <br> "Erik Lensherr," Stephanie repeated.  
> <br> "I knew you worked for him!" yelled Scott, and stood up from his chair. An optic blast flew out and fried the phone in her hand.

> <br> "Scott! What in the hell..." Stephanie began. Nightcrawler teleported behind her and seized her arms. "Kurt, what in the hell? Work for who?"

> <br> "Magneto. I knew you worked for him!" said Scott and pointed at her accusingly.

> <br> "Magneto, I don't know who that is, 'cept he's an' enemy of yours," Stephanie said and pulled away from Kurt.

> <br> "Then who is Erik Lensherr?" Rogue said with her hands on her hips. She remembered very vividly who Erik Lensherr was.

> <br> "That's who an old friend from my hometown said he was my father," said Stephanie. Every X-Man looked at each other. Stephanie could sense what they were thinking. "I've nevah talked ta him in mah life," She cried, the accent that only came out when she was frustrated becoming more and more prominent.

> <br> "Calm down, child," Storm said.

> <br> She looked at Storm, "I've been in New Orleans since I was fourteen. I couldn't o' talked with 'im. Ah was just a kid, an' that doesn't mean anythin', does it?" she whispered the last part. "Ah've never talked ta him before. If Ah had, I'd be one o' his little sentries, an' not an X-Man, now would Ah?"

> <br> "That's true, but we don't know that." Cyclops stepped closer to her. She realized he had some sort of restraints in his hands.

> <br> "I'm not workin' for 'im!" she cried, stepping back. "'Ro!" She looked over at Storm.

> <br> "Leave her alone, she's not hiding anything," Jean said.

> <br> "Jean?" Cyclops began.

> <br> "She's not hiding anything, Scott, just leave her alone."

> <br> Stephanie looked up at Scott and the other angrily. Tears were welling in her eyes as she turned away and stormed out of the cabin, and into one of the back rooms. "Stephanie" Storm said, following her.

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Eva opened her eyes to the sound of the door being opened. Sinister stood in front of her.

> <br> "Well, my child, it is good to see you are awake and well," he said.

> <br> "Essex, I'm only gonna ask ya once ta let me go," Eva said.

> <br> "So sure of yourself, aren't you, young Miss Cor? I suppose it runs in the family," he looked over at the man that the Marauders had brought in. "That won't last long," he said with a malevolent smile.

> <br> "For the love of God, jus' tell me what ya want," Eva pleaded.

> <br> He smiled.

> <br> "I want what Apocalypse wants, what the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants wants, and even the Mutant Liberation Front wants: your powers."

> <br> "Then by all means, take 'em. I dare ya. I don' need my powers, I've never needed 'r wanted 'em," Eva cried. Sinister crossed his arms.

> <br> "Like I said, so sure of yourself, thinking you don't need your powers. And like I said, that won't last long. Once your sister gets here all will be complete. I'll have you, her, Slip, and your father. All combined and tied with Remy LeBeau, I will have everything I need for my plans. Plus if she brings the X-Men there will be an added bonus, I'll have Cyclops and Phoenix."

> <br> "My father?" Eva questioned. The man that the Marauders had brought in looked up. Sinister smiled.

> <br> "Yes, I have him. I'll wait until your sister gets here and Slip wakes up, then I'll introduce you. As for now I'm going to give you something you've wanted for a long time," he said and the bonds released. Eva half fell and stood up strait. She shook out her arms. With a metallic shlink her claws snaked from the tips of her fingers and then lightening fast she dove forward at Sinister. She passed right through him and landed face first on the floor. He claws made a scraping sound on the metal floor.

> <br> "Tsk, tsk, tsk. Silly girl. That'll cost you some painkillers. Now get up," he said. Eva did as he said and stood up.

> <br> "\_BatÃ¢rd! \_Vous aux genous! \_Ane\_..." Eva began to cuss and threaten him in French. Sinister's arm flew out and struck her. She fell to the floor and moaned slightly.

> <br> "You'll do as I say, girl. Now, come," he said, and then led Eva out of the room. As she followed she glanced back at the man she didn't know. He looked almost like Marcus.

--

Stephanie's stiff face looked out the window of the blackbird. The island was so beautiful and Stephanie was too bitter to see it. Of course, if you had gone through half of the things she had there, you would be, too.

> <br> The compound was small on the outside, but inside it ran deep under ground.

> <br> "Look!" said Warren said and pointed out the front window. There was a small swarm of people on the beach. "They look like acolytes."

> <br> "Acolytes?" Stephanie questioned, her tearstained face looking up at him.

> <br> "Uh, the followers of Magneto," he replied uneasily.

> <br> "Oh," Stephanie said in a small voice.

> <br> "Why would they be here?" questioned Iceman. No one had an answer, though many of them thought that they were here for Eva and Marcus, and that Stephanie was lying about not knowing Magneto.

> <br> "I'm gonna put her down on the opposite beach. We can go on foot from there," Scott said and began to navigate around the island. He eased the plane down and all the X-Men got off quickly.

> <br> "Here's how it's going to work: Storm, Nightcrawler, and Jean, Force, and Morph will circle around to the east, and Iceman, Rogue, Warren, Beast, and I will circle to the west," said Scott.

> <br> "No," said Stephanie.

> <br> Scott narrowed his eyes at her, "What?"

> <br> "Won't work. His security perimeter won't allow it. Ya'll have ta listen ta me now," Stephanie said and looked them over. They didn't trust her now, she could tell. The new revelations had warped their trust of her. "\_Aren't I still the same person?" she asked herself. This skepticism, she'd felt it before, from her aunt, her employers, even her guild.

> <br> Scott looked at Storm. "Do not look at me in that way. I trust her," she said , crossing her arms.

> <br> "Fine, what can we do then?" Scott asked, sounding irritated..

> <br> "First off, some of ya just can't come. Ya want small numbers. Morph, Nightcrawler, Beast, Storm, and Rouge would be best. You'd all be useful and not as conspicuous, and ya'll creep easier and be quieter. The rest of ya can stay here," Stephanie said.

> <br> "This is my mission, \_Force\_" said Cyclops. There was a

sarcastic tone in his voice when he said her name.

> <br> Stephanie narrowed her eyes at him. They had been at each other's throats dozens of times before, and they were again.

> <br> "Fine, ya can take yar mission, \_homme\_, and try an' fight 'im, but ya won't make it out, alive, not without me. I know th' way this place works, ya'll listen ta me, ya have ta. But if ya don' want ta, I'll jus' go an' take care o' 'im myself," Stephanie said, crossing her arms.

> <br> "She's right, Scott, we need her knowledge of this place, and her powers," said Jean and put her hand on her lover's shoulder. There were signs of a telepathic conversation between the two for a moment.

> <br> Scott threw his arms up, "Fine, Force, the mission is in your hands!"

> <br> Jean smiled.

> <br> "Thank ya, Fearless Leader. Now those of ya I named are comin' with me. I want the rest of ya ta stay her unless I call ya or 48 hours have passed an' ya've not heard from us. Got it?" They nodded. "Good. Now, were gonna head this way." She pointed to the east. "Let's go!" They began to walk, while the rest headed back onto the Blackbird.

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Marcus gazed around the room. He could feel a power damper collar on his neck. He could hear the voices of Logan, Remy, and someone else arguing. He realized his arms were bound over his head and were getting numb. His legs were bound to the wall by his ankles. He looked over and saw Logan and Remy to his right. There was another man to his left. He paid no attention to him. His blood sugar was low.

> <br> "Hey, ya all right, Mark?" Logan asked.

> <br> "\_O\_-\_oui\_, I \_penser aninsi\_," Marcus said, dazed. He had the demeanor of a drunken man.

> <br> "In English," Logan said.

> <br> "'ell I don' know!" Marcus groaned. "My head..." He looked over to the man next to him. "Who in th' 'ell are ya?" He asked, still dazed.

> <br> "Don't even bother with him, kid, he's the last person you need to talk to," said Logan.

> <br> "Erik," said the man.

> <br> "Heh, that's my dad's name," Marcus said, his face turning from amused to bitter. "If I ever meet that man, I'll kill 'im."

> <br> Logan looked over to Erik. "Told ya, Mags," he said with a chuckle.

> <br> "Told 'im what?" asked Marcus and looked over to Logan.

> <br> "Nothin'," said Remy. "Don' worry 'bout it."

> <br> "Damn..." Marcus groaned and hung his head limply.

> <br> "You okay?" asked Remy.

> <br> "I'm sick, need the insulin," groaned Marcus.

> <br> "Well try and stay awake, kid," Logan said.

> <br> "Don' call me kid, ya bastard!" Marcus yelled, and swayed in his restraints and groaned.

> <br> "What kind of drug did they put in him?" asked Erik.

> <br> "Dis is bad. He's not even dis bad when he drunk. He's diabetic; needs sugar," said Remy.

> <br> The door opened and all four of the men looked up. Shout was dragging in Eva, who was very alert. Her face was tear stained and red. Her uniform was gone and replaced with a plain cloth gown. Her left hand was bandage thick with gauze. She struggled against Shout.

> <br> "Lucas Whitteker," growled Remy under his breath.  
> <br> Marcus looked up, his eyes looked bloodshot, "Lucas Whitteker! Ya gotta lotta nerve! If I wat'n't restrained I'd..." He struggled against the bonds as hard as he could. His wrists tore against them.

> <br> "Cool it, Cor," said Shout in his characteristic British accent, and he forced Eva into the bonds.  
> <br> "Cool it? Ya're so dead, boy! I'm gonna take ya out the next chance I get, it's a promise this time, \_homme\_!" Marcus yelled at him as loud as he could. He began to spout loud gutter-French. Shout punched him in the stomach.  
> <br> "Stop it, Lou! He's sick!" cried Eva. She received a punch, too.  
> <br> "Don't hurt them," yelled Erik. Shout ignored him, and then punched him across the face. Erik could taste the blood in his mouth.

> <br> "I don't want to hear a bloody thing from you!" he yelled and stormed from the room. Eva looked at the others.  
> <br> "Ya all right, chere?" asked Remy.  
> <br> "I -- He -- That asshole did the same thing ta my left hand he did ta the other one," said Eva and motioned with her bandaged hand. "He only gave me local anestisia," she whispered.  
> <br> "We're going to get out of her, Eva," said Erik. Eva looked around Marcus to him.  
> <br> "Now that ya're up an' seem t' know who I am who in th' hell are you?" she asked.  
> <br> "It's a long story, my dear. I'll explain later," he said. Eva looked at him suspiciously; he looked too much like Marcus and her sister.  
> <br> "Are you my father?" she asked. Marcus suddenly looked up.  
> <br> "I-- yes, I am," he said, stunned she knew.  
> <br> "He told me you'd be here," Eva said, and she turned away. Tears again.  
> <br> "Eva" Erik began.  
> <br> "No, shhh," she hushed him. No one spoke for a long time. Inside his observation room, Sinister watched and listened to what was happening in the cell. He smiled; she was breaking.

--

> Stephanie crouched in the midst of the palm trees and tropical underbrush. The X-Men she had brought with her were about 300 feet behind her. She scanned the perimeter. It was all clear, except for a sentry outside, it looked like Prisim. She thought of the others. She knew it wasn't smart to bring them with her, she'd be detected to easily, but if she didn't have them and was detected, she didn't have a fighting chance of making it out alive.<br>  
> #Okay, slowly, make your way up 'ere. Watch out for traps.#  
Stephanie sent the telepathic word out to the others. Slowly, they made their way up to where Stephanie was waiting. She looked at them and then plotted what they would do. #Morph?#<br>  
> #Yeah?#<br>  
> #How good of a Sabertooth can ya do?#<br>  
> Morph smiled and suddenly shifted into an exact copy of Victor Creed, right down to the icy stare he gave Stephanie. #How's this?#<br>  
> #Hun, that's perfect. Ya see Prisim up there?# Morph nodded. #I want ya ta take him down, subtly.#<br>

> "You got it," he said and got up, his signature cackle sounded as he headed up to the compound door.<br>  
> Prisim looked at the man who approached him. He shifted his gun, "Creed? How in the hell did you get out past me?"<br>  
> Morph smiled, "Yer not as quick as me." He walked right up to him. Morph's hand slipped down and caught a small gas canister on his belt. He brought it up and opened it like a shaken up soda into Prisim's face. <br>  
> "What the hell...?" Prisim said and tried to get away. Morph grabbed his arm and forced the canister in his face. Prisim dropped to the ground. Morph reverted his form.<br>  
> Stephanie smiled as she saw the Marauder fall to the ground. <em>One down, six to go<em>.  
> <br> "Bravo and thanks, X-Man," said a voice. Morph turned. Stephanie and the other stood up and turned around. From behind them came a small flood of people, led by a blonde a man.  
> <br> "Who in the hell are you?" asked Stephanie.  
> <br> "It won't matter to you in the long run, X-Man," said the man.  
  
> <br> "That's Fabian Cortez, an acolyte," said Rogue.  
> <br> "What are ya doing 'ere?"  
> <br> "Is it any of you matter, X-Man?"  
> <br> "Yes, it is. Some of my teammates are being held in there, their well being is important to me."  
> <br> "Lord Magneto has been caught and is being held by Mr. Sinister, that is why we are here," said a redheaded woman.  
> <br> "Quiet, Voght," said Fabian. "Let's move." He said and motioned to the others. They began to follow.  
> <br> "Yer not gettin' through," said Stephanie. "You'll mess up my whole mission. I won't let ya do that." \_Come on, Misiour Cortez, push me! I wanna bust some heads right now, be fun.\_  
> <br> "And just how would you stop me, X-Man?" asked Fabian, amused. Stephanie smiled and her eyes flared silver. Blue electricity crackled around her. She sent a chill of mild electromagnetic energy throughout them.  
> <br> "My God, she has the same powers as Lord Magneto," marveled one of the Acolytes.  
> <br> "Who are you?" Fabian asked, stunned, he stepped back a couple of feet.  
> <br> "I am Force," she replied and all of the Acolytes passed out. "Daughter of your 'god'," she said so quietly that no one could hear not even herself.  
> <br> "Vhat did you do?" asked Nightcrawler.  
> <br> "Cut off th' blood ta their brains for a moment. They'll be fine, don' worry," said Stephanie with a sneaky smile. "Let's go." All of them left the acolytes and walked off toward the compound. She was remembering now what had gone down before; vengeance would be upon her before the end of the day.

--

Inside their cell, Marcus, Eva, Remy, Logan, and Erik closed their eyes as cement, plaster, and other debris fell from the ceiling.

> <br> "What in the hell is going on?" cried Erik.  
> <br> "Stephanie," replied Remy. "We may get outta here yet..."

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Morph, Nightcrawler, Beast, Storm, and Rogue watched Stephanie. She

stood in front of the compound. I'm gonna end it now. The fight will be here. He won't hide, they won't hide.\_ She raised her hands and energy coursed through her. The metal beams of the compound's roof were snapped like matchsticks and pulled off the tops of the walls. They hung in the air for a moment. With a flick of her wrist they were thrust two miles out into the ocean.

> <br> Outside, where the other X-Men at the Blackbird waited, Jean, who was keeping telepathic tabs on all of the members who were away, let out a cry and nearly fainted.

> <br> "Jean?" Scott questioned and braced her.

> <br> "It's Force. She's going to kill herself," Jean gasped. "We have to get to her now!"

--

Stephanie smiled, flew off the ground a few feet, and waited for the Marauders to come out.

> <br> "Force!" Storm screamed at her. "What are you doing?" Storm summoned winds to carry her to where Stephanie hovered. "Force?" She looked at Stephanie's eyes her bloodshot eyes. "Goddess, are you all right?"

> <br> "No, I am not. I'm endin' it now," she replied, unmoving. "Ya should take everyone and leave, or you'll get hurt." \_Gotta stop it...\_

> <br> There was a shot, a bullet, before Storm could say anything. Stephanie used her powers at the last minute to deflect it form harming anyone, however it grazed Rogue, and then flew into the water. Scalphunter stood with the other Marauders in front of the building. All of the X-Men stood alert. \_Since when da they use regular civilian guns?\_

> <br> He chuckled, "Nice move, Cor." He smiled, "Ya want to die today?"

> <br> "Ya'll get no such pleasure from me, Scalphunter, I'm here ta kill \*you\*," Stephanie said. Storm's mouth dropped open.

> <br> "Cocky Bitch," sneered Riptide. Stephanie's powers kicked in and created an energy shield; she flew closer to the Marauders. She smiled in a way that would send chills down your spine.

> <br> "I just want my family back and my friend," she said and paused for a moment, she remembered the daughter that she had that he had taken. Then she repeated herself. "My sister, my brothers, my friend, and my father."

> <br> "You know he's here, huh? So much for the surprise," said Scalphunter. He pulled a piece of metal from his costume. Stephanie used her powers to bend it tightly around his hand.

> <br> "Get it off, ya bitch!" he yelled as it tightened. He shook his hand.

> <br> Stephanie loosened it a bit. "A fight. Hand ta hand. You an' me. No weapons," she offered.

> <br> "You really do wanna die today, don't you?" he said and ripped the piece of metal off his hand, which she had released from her manipulation, and threw it to the sand.

> <br> "No, I want ta kill ya, stop people from bein' hurt," she said.

> <br> "Stephanie, you can't do this," yelled Jean as she came flying over the trees. Archangel next to her, and approaching on the beach, Cyclops, and Iceman.

> <br> "What did I tell ya? It's too bad ya think that way, Jean, but I have ta do this." #I'm distracting them, the rest of ya try and get into the compound and get Ev', Mark, Rem' an' Logan.# Everyone nodded mentally. "So, whata ya say, Scalpie, you an' me? It a deal?" She

issued the challenge again.

> <br> Scalphunter looked over at Shout and winked. Shout winked back and opened his mouth. "NO!" screamed Stephanie. "Lucas! NO!" she shrieked louder and threw up a large shield at the last minute. It deflected the sound waves back to the Marauders and away from the X-Men, but didn't stop them in time from hitting her. She screamed and collapsed from the menial height she was at. Every Marauder was down as well.

> <br> "Goddess! Force!" cried Storm and ran over to her. Beast ran over quickly as well. She was breathing in short, gasping breaths. Her body was limp, near death it was beaten so badly. She let her mind be carried to wherever it may go.

> <br> "Oh my stars and garters," said Hank. He took her pulse, which was low, dangerously low.

> <br> Jean put her hand on her forehead. "Her temperature's dropping! We need to get her back to the Blackbird!"

> <br> "I'll get her there," said Nightcrawler.

> <br> "No, you'll risk spinal injury. Get a stretcher and a med-kit and bring it back," said Beast. In a burst of sulfur and brimstone Nightcrawler was gone, and a second later he was back with a medical kit and a stretcher. Beast was immediately at work.

> <br> "What about..." Rogue began.

> <br> "We're here," said Remy. Eva, Remy, and Logan came out of the broken down compound. Leaning on Logan and Remy was Marcus. Eva's arm was curled up like a broken wing on a bird.

> <br> "How did you get out?" Cyclops questioned as they laid Marcus down next to Beast. Eva motioned with her head behind them to Magneto and his acolytes. His arms were crossed across his chest and looking very regal. He began to approach them.

> <br> "Magneto," said Rogue quietly and stepped back.

> <br> "Hello to you too, Rogue," he said and walked over. Cyclops' visor flashed.

> <br> "Forgive me for having concern and wanting to see my long-lost children, Summers," said Magneto, sounding irritated.

> <br> "So it's true?" asked Cyclops looking them over.

> <br> "It's not like you ever doubted it before, Scott," Eva whispered. She knelt down to where Jean and Beast were working feverishly on her brother and sister to offer her assistance. She explained Marcus's status to them. Magneto kept a watchful and concerned gaze on them.

> <br> "What about Sinister?" asked Scott.

> <br> "He made a break fer it," said Logan.

> <br> He put his hand on Eva's shoulder and squeezed it lightly, as if to tell her what she thought. She was of no help at that point as a doctor with her injuries, she was only in the way. She stood up and stepped away. Logan stayed close to her. His hand was still on her shoulder. She watched her siblings carefully and cradled her bandaged hand.

> <br> "Will they be all right?" questioned Magneto.

> <br> "I need to get them back to the mansion," Beast said and looked up. "Oh, my stars and garters!" he gasped, he hadn't paid any attention to the developments outside the work at hand. Iceman chuckled quietly. "This is certainly awkward. But, we do need to get these two back, immediately. Nightcrawler, if you would."

> <br> "Of course," Nightcrawler replied and place his hand on the two. In a burst of brimstone and sulfur, he was gone with them.

> <br> "All right, let's go," said Cyclops. Jean lifted herself and several of the X-Men into the sky. Warren took to flight and Iceman created a long path of ice that he used his powers to travel across. Storm used the wind; Remy and Logan remained on the beach with Eva.



> <br> She turned to Magneto. "I--" she began. She swallowed and blinked quickly. She twisted her fingers that weren't wrapped thick with gauze about nervously. Logan put his hand on her shoulder and squeezed, almost in encouragement, letting her know she was not alone. "Uh, yeah -- I," she sputtered and turned away, unable to speak to him. She lifted Remy and Logan and herself into the air with her powers and took off through the sky for the Blackbird.  
> <br> Fabian Cortez shook his head in disapproval as her disrespect.

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## Epilogue

> <em>  
> <br> Pietro and Wanda Maximoff stepped out of the taxi. Pietro got their bags from the trunk. Wanda gave the driver a twenty and he drove off. The mansion's large door opened and Stephanie, Eva, and Marcus stepped out onto the front step. Wanda and Pietro approached.

> <br> "Hello, you must be Eva, Stephanie and Marcus," said Wanda with a slight smile.

> <br> "Yeah, I'm Stephanie, and this is Marcus and Eva," said Stephanie and motioned between them. Everyone exchanged handshakes.

> <br> "This is sorta awkward..." Eva said as they all stood without words on the stairs. "Well, we should go inside an' sit down. I'm sure ya'll'd like ta get off yer feet after your trip, have some coffee," Eva said. "And I know the professor was looking forward ta seeing ya."

> <br> "That would be nice," said Pietro. The five turned and walked into the mansion.

The End

End  
file.